



The President's Daily Brief

16 August 1971

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

There has been some easing of the tension between Jordan and Syria, but any early reconciliation still seems unlikely. (Page 1)

On Page 2, we discuss developments in the UK-Malta negotiations.

Chile. (Page 3)

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JORDAN-SYRIA

Both Syrian and Jordanian forces remain in a high state of readiness, but tensions have eased somewhat in the absence of any new border clashes since Friday, and both governments appear more conciliatory. Neither has expelled the other's diplomats despite the break in relations. The Jordanian press has continued to put the blame for the border incidents on the fedayeen and has made no mention of Syrian air attacks against Jordanian armor. For their part, the Syrians have reopened the border to non-Jordanian vehicles and passengers, and President Asad did not even mention the fighting in a speech on Saturday.

In contrast to the conciliatory Jordanian attitude toward Syria, King Husayn was adamant in rejecting proposals put forth last week by Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Saqqaf and Egyptian President Sadat's personal emissary Khuli, who have been trying to mediate between the Jordanian Government and the fedayeen. Husayn countered these proposals, which aimed at a reconciliation under the earlier Cairo-Amman agreements, with a call for ending economic and political pressures on Jordan, and for a ban on secret fedayeen organizations and on terrorist and infiltration activity in Jordan.

Press reports from Damascus, where Saqqaf and Khuli went on 13 August to meet with fedayeen leader Yasir Arafat, indicate that the fedayeen refuse to accept Husayn's terms and will agree only to the original Saqqaf-Khuli proposals. The Jordanian attitude toward the fedayeen will make it difficult for the Syrians to take any early steps to re-establish relations and could force Asad to adopt an even harder line toward Jordan as he tries to keep some credit with the fedayeen.

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MALTA-UK

Prime Minister Mintoﬀ has now firmly rejected the second of the British proposals made last week on the amounts of aid and cash London and certain NATO allies are prepared to offer. The British have agreed, under pressure from some NATO members who think London is taking too hard a line, to consider sending Mintoﬀ a still more conciliatory message; details are to be worked out in a North Atlantic Council meeting early this week. London also appears willing for the first time to agree to present Mintoﬀ a firm figure on the emergency financial aid he claims is so vital.

There have been signs that Mintoﬀ intends to keep the negotiations alive. He did not carry out his threat to oust British troops on 13 August if no agreement had been reached, and he has now given London until the 18th to reply. He also told the German ambassador on Friday that he would accept an offer from Bonn or Washington of an interest-free, "no-strings-attached" loan of \$4.8 million.

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NOTES

USSR-Chile-China

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Ireland

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Bahrain: Bahrain's ending of its protectorate relationship with Britain and assumption of full independence on Saturday have been greeted calmly by its neighbors. Iran sent a message of congratulations that amounted to virtual recognition, while Kuwait and Saudi Arabia also sent their congratulations. A statement by Sheikh Isa that Bahrain's independence would not affect its "readiness to accede" to some federation of the Persian Gulf amirates apparently reassured Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, who strongly favor eventual federation of all the amirates. Qatar is expected to follow Bahrain's lead shortly and will probably also receive prompt recognition by its neighbors.

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